

Quit because you can

HSQ97112/20

An essential guide
to quitting smoking

 **Quitline**
137848

Yes you can quit smoking

Over the years we've learned a lot about how to quit smoking from those who know—people who have stopped smoking for good. What we have learned is here in your *Quit because you can* book.

It's got the facts that show quitting is the right choice. It also has plenty of ideas about how you can quit.

Make the book work for you. Write in it. Underline the parts that really mean something to you. Flick to the checklist pages to jog your memory on important points.

Keep this book handy so you can refer to it as you go through the different stages of quitting.

Like all good things, it's going to take some time and effort for you to quit smoking, but millions of smokers in Australia have already stopped. You can too.

You need to know

Chemicals in cigarettes change the way some medications work. See your doctor before quitting if you are taking any medication.

If you are suffering from depression, anxiety or another mental illness, it is best to see your doctor for advice before quitting. With the right support, many people with mental illness have quit, and they generally feel a lot better, not just physically, but also emotionally.

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Reasons to quit



“I was never able
to keep up with my kids,
I wanted to be able to kick
around the ball without being
out of breath.”

Do you know why you want to stop smoking?

People who have quit say it's important to be clear about your reasons. Work out what reasons are important for you. You may have tried to quit before, maybe many times. It's still a good idea to remind yourself why you want to quit.

What are you looking forward to when you quit?

Feeling healthy

Smokers are more likely to catch the flu and other illnesses, and tend to have more severe symptoms. Even young smokers have more coughs, phlegm, wheezing and chest infections than non-smokers. In the months after quitting, your immune system improves and becomes better at fighting infection.

More money

In a way, giving up smoking is like getting a pay rise—more than \$6400 a year if you smoke 20 cigarettes a day. Start making your wish list and see how much money you'll save using the online calculator at www.quit.org.au.

Getting fit

Smoking makes it harder to get enough oxygen to your muscles during exercise, so you tire more quickly. Quitting lets your body work properly again and within a few months exercising is easier.

Freedom from the hassles of smoking

White teeth, no stained fingers, the house and car smelling fresh and clean, and never having to check you have enough cigarettes.

Less stress

Within a few months of quitting, most people feel less stressed than when they were smoking.

Regaining control

Many smokers come to realise that they are addicted and are not really choosing to smoke. Regaining control feels good.

More confidence

Once you succeed, you will have more confidence to take on other challenges.

Try this

Even now you might still be wondering whether you really do want to quit. Take your time to think about your reasons for wanting to smoke, and your reasons for wanting to stop.

List all your reasons on both sides and circle the three most important ones on each list. Then put a star next to the one reason that is most important to you—just one star, not one for each list.

Why I want to smoke	Why I want to quit

Your decision might be a very close one, or one side may be a clear winner. The important thing is to decide which you most want to do and act on that decision.

It is common to set out to quit with a part of you still wanting to smoke. You need to accept this, and commit yourself to quitting. Working out how to get the things you got from smoking in other ways is an important part of quitting.

Before or during pregnancy

Quitting at any time during your pregnancy reduces the risk of harm to your baby. Quitting smoking when you're pregnant will make you feel good and give your baby a better start in life.

Quit for surgery

There are many benefits when you quit before surgery, including a lower risk of complications, which can mean a faster recovery and less time in hospital.

Protect others

Children's delicate airways are more sensitive to dangerous chemicals in cigarette smoke in the air. Quitting smoking also reduces the chance that your children will take up smoking themselves.

Quitting smoking
has immediate and
long-term benefits,
even if you have a
smoking-related
disease.

When you quit

The day you quit smoking your body starts to recover.

Within six hours

- › Your heart rate slows and your blood pressure becomes more stable.

Within a day

- › Almost all of the nicotine is out of your bloodstream.
- › The level of carbon monoxide in your blood drops and oxygen more easily reaches the heart and muscles.
- › Your fingertips become warmer and your hands may be steadier.

Within a week

- › Your sense of taste and smell may improve.
- › Your lungs' natural cleaning system starts to recover, becoming better at removing mucus, tar and dust from your lungs.
- › Your vitamin C blood levels improve.

Within two months

- › You cough and wheeze less.
- › Your immune system begins its recovery so your body is better at fighting off infection.
- › Your blood is less thick and sticky and blood flow to your hands and feet improves.

Within six months

- › You are less likely to cough up phlegm.

After one year

- › Your lungs are healthier and you are breathing easier than if you'd kept smoking.

Within two to five years

- › There is a large drop in your risk of heart attack and stroke which continues to decrease over time.
- › For women, the risk of cancer of the cervix is the same as someone who has never smoked.

Stopping smoking reduces your risk of developing, and slows down any worsening, of lung disease.

Within 10 years

- › Your risk of lung cancer is lower than that of someone who still smokes.

After 15 years

- › Your risk of heart attack and stroke is close to that of a person who has never smoked.

Smoking causes disease

Smoking harms almost every organ in your body. But because it happens gradually, you probably don't notice. The strain put on your body by smoking often causes years of suffering.

Tobacco smoke is made up of over 7000 chemicals. At least 69 of them are known to cause cancer. Many of these chemicals pass through your lungs into your bloodstream. They go everywhere your blood flows.

One in two lifetime smokers will die from their addiction, on average 10 to 15 years earlier than non-smokers.

Smoking can cause many serious diseases including:

- › cancer of the lungs, mouth, nose, throat, oesophagus, pancreas, kidney, stomach, liver, bladder, bowel, ureter, ovary, cervix, and bone marrow
- › lung diseases such as chronic bronchitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease which includes emphysema
- › heart disease and stroke
- › poor blood circulation in feet and hands, which can lead to pain and, in severe cases, gangrene and amputation
- › disabilities such as blindness, hip fractures and painful ulcers.

All cigarettes are toxic

It doesn't help if you smoke weaker tasting cigarettes such as those labelled 'fine', 'smooth' or 'refined'. These cigarettes have holes in the filter that let in air to dilute the smoke. But you still end up inhaling the same amount of chemicals as you would from stronger tasting cigarettes. So you do the same amount of damage.

Deciding to quit checklist



- ☐ I will reduce my risk of heart attack.
- ☐ I will feel fitter.
- ☐ I will set a great example for the children around me.
- ☐ My lungs will start to recover and be able to clean themselves properly.
- ☐ I will have more money to spend any way I choose.
- ☐ I will give myself a confidence boost by quitting cigarettes.


Try this

From the following list, tick the things you are looking forward to when you are a non-smoker. Add your own ideas in the space provided.

- ☐ Having more energy to play sport or keep up with the kids.
- ☐ Knowing I'm back in control and no longer addicted.
- ☐ Freedom from the hassle of always checking that I have enough cigarettes.

Preparing to quit

Prepare

A man with a beard and a blue cap is sitting in the driver's seat of a car. He is wearing an orange polo shirt with a dark collar. He is looking down at a black box filled with cigarettes that he is holding in his hands. The background is slightly blurred, showing the interior of the car and some outdoor elements.

“The last time I quit
I set a date, got rid of all my
ashtrays, lighters and things that
triggered me to have a smoke
and never looked back.”

Most people are not 100 per cent sure about quitting and many are worried about how they might cope without cigarettes. This is normal. Don't put off quitting because you feel this way—there is lots of help to get you through.

Planning can help you understand why you smoke and set up some quitting strategies.

If you've tried to quit before, remember the things that worked for you and the things that didn't. You can use what you learned to make your plan stronger.

There are four things you need to do:

- 1] understand your nicotine addiction
- 2] know why you smoke
- 3] choose the best way to quit
- 4] start putting your quitting plan into action.

1 Understand your nicotine addiction

Nicotine is the addictive drug in tobacco. After you've been smoking for a while, your body gets used to nicotine and relies on it to feel normal.

Do you have any of these signs of nicotine addiction?

- › You smoke your first cigarette within 30 minutes of waking up.
- › You smoke more than 10 cigarettes per day.
- › You have cravings and withdrawal symptoms when you try to quit.

Nicotine affects the chemicals in your brain, and after a puff, you may feel good for a moment or two. It may make you feel relaxed or more alert but this doesn't last long.

After a while you may feel tense or irritable, or you may find it hard to focus on what you are doing. But your next cigarette relieves these feelings. These up-and-down mood changes over the day are common among smokers. Quitting breaks this smoking–stress cycle.

2 Know why you smoke

All smokers have their own smoking habits. These habits are usually tied to certain moods, activities, events, places or people. They may be quite strong bonds.

Some of the most common reasons why people smoke are:

- › addiction: to satisfy the craving for nicotine or a cigarette
- › habit: feeling like smoking while doing things or taking a break, such as after a meal, with coffee or when drinking alcohol, while watching TV
- › emotions: feeling stressed, upset, angry, frustrated, bored or happy
- › pleasure: to enjoy something even more or to reward yourself
- › social pressure: feeling part of the crowd, bonding with other smokers.

Being in these situations after you have quit will usually trigger cravings. Knowing what makes you want to smoke can help you plan how to cope in trigger situations.

Use the *Smoking Diary* (page 23) to learn about your habits while you prepare to quit.

Try this

Smoking diary—See page 23

You can learn about your habit while you prepare to quit.

Tear out your *Smoking Diary* and carry it with you everywhere for a day.

For your best chance of quitting:

Get some support

- 13 QUIT (13 7848)
- a health professional who is trained to help people quit
- an interactive website or SMS service



use nicotine
replacement products
or
quitting medications

3 Choose the best way to quit

Some people see quitting as a private battle between themselves and cigarettes. But getting help is not a sign of weakness or lack of will power—it's a smart way to quit.

Get some support

A support service gives you structure, motivation, support, new skills and confidence. It is much harder to get these things when you try to quit on your own. Getting support will give you a much greater chance of long-term success.

Here are some good support services:

Call the Quitline on 13 QUIT (13 7848)

Quitline advisors offer help with quitting for the cost of a local call (except for mobiles). Your Quitline advisor is trained and experienced and knows how tough giving up smoking can be. They will talk with you about your difficulties with quitting and give you reliable information and support. You can arrange to have a Quitline advisor call you. Your call is confidential.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Quitline has a team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counsellors who provide culturally secure support to clients through a call back program.

Go online with Quit HQ

www.qld.gov.au/quithq

Quit HQ is the one-stop-shop for quit smoking information and support to empower you to start your quit smoking journey and help you to quit for good. It includes quit smoking materials, resources, interactive tools, videos and programs all in one location.

To access
more services in
your state, see
page 45.

Talk to your doctor, pharmacist or other health professional

Doctors and pharmacists are good sources of advice about stopping smoking, especially for advice on quitting medications and nicotine replacement products. You need to see a doctor if you want to use prescription medications or pay less for nicotine patches. If you have health problems such as a mental illness, diabetes or are taking medication, it is important to see your doctor or health professional before quitting. They may need to check your health and medication levels when you quit.

Use quitting products

Nicotine replacement products and quitting medications increase your chances of quitting successfully. They are suitable for smokers who show any signs of nicotine addiction (see page 12).

They reduce withdrawal symptoms such as cravings, irritability, trouble concentrating and anxiety. They usually do not stop withdrawal symptoms altogether. Most people's smoking is also linked to habits and emotions. So you are likely to still get some cravings in situations where you used to smoke.

Nicotine replacement products, such as the patch, gum, lozenge, mouth spray and inhalator, work by replacing some of the nicotine you usually get from cigarettes. Using nicotine products to quit is much safer than smoking—they do not contain the dangerous chemicals found in tobacco smoke. You can use the patch and another nicotine product at the same time if one product is not enough to manage cravings.

Your doctor or pharmacist can explain to you how to use these products. Nicotine patches are much cheaper if you get a prescription for them from your doctor.

Prescription medications, such as Champix (varenicline) and Zyban (bupropion), must be discussed with your doctor as they are not suitable for everyone. You can have one course per year of each medication on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), so you pay less for it.

If you slip up and have a cigarette, it is safe to continue using your medication or nicotine products, and to keep trying to quit.

Gather information

Talk to other people who have quit about how they did it. There are some useful websites (see page 45). Remember, different things work for different people.

Learning from past attempts

Have you tried to quit before? Past attempts at quitting are valuable experience that you can build on. What strategies worked best? Are there situations you need to prepare for? Write these down in your *Quitting Plan* (page 18).

Quitting abruptly

Quitting abruptly or suddenly is a popular way to stop smoking. For smokers of 15 cigarettes or more per day, using a nicotine patch while cutting down over two weeks before stopping smoking also works well.

Cutting down to quit

Some people quit successfully by cutting down, but if you decide to do this:

- › it's important to have a clear plan, and a quit date
- › use a support person or service to help you stick to your goals
- › talk to your pharmacist about using nicotine replacement products while cutting down.

Get help from friends and family

The support and encouragement of friends and family is important.

If you do talk to your friends and family about your quitting, explain how they can help—for example, by not offering you cigarettes if they smoke, or by being patient if you are a bit irritable at first. Quitting with a friend can be useful as you can help each other through the hard times.

Living with a smoker

If you live with a smoker, it can be good to talk to them about your plans. If they are ready to quit too, then quitting together can help. However, if they are not ready, at least ask for their support by not making it any more difficult than it will otherwise be.

- › Can you talk things over before you quit?
- › Can you make the house smoke-free? If this isn't possible, see if you can agree to some rooms being smoke-free.
- › How will you catch up without smoking cigarettes?
- › Can they keep cigarettes out of sight?
- › What kind of support will you need from them? What support are they willing to give?

4 Start putting your quitting plan into action

Make a decision about how you are going to quit.

You may choose to:

- › call 13 QUIT (13 7848) or contact other support for advice
- › talk to your doctor or pharmacist
- › use a quitting medication or nicotine replacement products
- › set a date to quit.

If you don't stop on your quit date, don't worry. It is not a test. It's just a way of helping you focus on what you need to do to quit and to put your plans into action. Just choose another day and have another go. Don't give up giving up.

Practise quitting

If you haven't tried to quit recently, you might set yourself some smaller goals to see how you would go before you quit. Try quitting for only one day. Or you could experiment by not smoking at times when you normally would, such as when you're out with friends or having a break with other smokers at work. This will help you work out how much you need to prepare for these situations when you quit completely.

Try this

Throw away all cigarettes, lighters and ashtrays in your home and car. If your partner smokes, suggest that he or she stops too, or only smokes outside the house.

Remember you will be more likely to succeed with support, such as 13 QUIT (13 7848) and using nicotine replacement products or quitting medication.

My quitting plan

Write out your Quitting Plan
Use your Smoking Diary
(page 23) to help you

My main reasons to quit:

The support I will get:

The nicotine replacement product(s) or quitting medication I will use:

My three main triggers to smoke:

Instead of smoking I will:

I will take action by (✓):

☐ Calling Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) on:

☐ Making an appointment with my doctor on:

☐ Setting a quit date on:

Change or add to your plan if you find you need new strategies to deal with difficult times.

Staying quit

Staying quit

“I told my family and friends my quit day, so they could help me when I needed it the most. I couldn’t have done it without them.”

Now it's time to put all your work into practice and quit.

You are ready

- › You've made your decision to quit.
- › You have any information or support you feel you need.
- › You've done your planning.
- › You've started putting your plan to quit into action.

Stick to your decision

You're doing the right thing.

Understand withdrawal symptoms

Withdrawal symptoms are the way your body reacts when it stops getting nicotine and all the other chemicals in tobacco smoke. Think of them as recovery symptoms.

Common recovery symptoms include:

- › cravings
- › feelings of irritability, frustration, depression or anxiety
- › feelings of restlessness and/or difficulty concentrating
- › changed sleeping patterns
- › increase in appetite and weight gain.

Some people may also have:

- › coughing or sneezing
- › mouth ulcers
- › upset digestion and/or bowel
- › mood swings
- › dizziness
- › more dreams.

Usually, you won't have all of these symptoms, and those that do affect you will rarely last more than a few weeks.

Remember
Your best chance of
quitting = support
(e.g. Quitline, The
QuitCoach, your doctor)
+ nicotine replacement
products or quitting
medication

Some recovery symptoms will come and go over the first week. Most are gone within two to four weeks some people may have symptoms for longer. The emotional symptoms—such as irritability or frustration—fade as your body adjusts to being nicotine free.

Each craving usually lasts a short time, but may be strong. Over time, cravings will happen less often. You may get occasional cravings (the urge or desire to smoke) long after other recovery symptoms have gone. These cravings are triggered by being in situations where you used to smoke.

If you have trouble with certain withdrawal symptoms, plan how you could cope or work around them. For example, warn your family you might be cranky for a few weeks and ask for their patience.

The more withdrawal symptoms you have, the more you will benefit from using nicotine replacement products or quitting medications.

Exercise can also help reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms. It may lower stress and help keep your weight down.

Quitting and mood

Early on, some people feel that their moods are up and down, or all over the place, for example getting angry over small things. This is quite normal and it will pass. Giving up cigarettes can also feel like losing a friend. Your emotions will settle down over time and you will feel more confident as you become comfortable with new ways of managing without cigarettes.

Tips for managing stress are on pages 33 to 36.

Within a few months of quitting, most people tend to feel less stressed than when they were smoking.

Coping with cravings

Few smokers can quit without feeling the urge or desire to smoke. The first week after you quit can be the hardest, as cravings can be more frequent and intense.

As well as using nicotine replacement products or prescription medications to reduce cravings you can also:

- 1] change your environment
- 2] use coping thoughts
- 3] change what you do.

1 Change your environment

Cravings occur most commonly in situations that remind you of smoking.

You can reduce how often and how strongly cravings occur by making your environment 'quitting friendly'.

Try these tips:

- › Make your home and car smoke-free. If that's not possible, have at least one smoke-free area for yourself.
- › Use places where you are not allowed to smoke as 'protection' until the craving passes.
- › If possible, make sure there are no cigarettes in your house or car.
- › Ask others not to smoke around you.
- › Avoid situations that will be tough while cravings are still intense and frequent.

[\[continued page 27\]](#)

Cravings occur most commonly in situations that remind you of smoking.

One day Smoking Diary

Lift out

You can learn about your habit while you prepare to quit.

Tear out your Smoking Diary and carry it with you everywhere for a day.

First, write down the number of cigarettes left in your pack:

Cigarettes in pack

Date

Each time you have a cigarette, or feel a craving, fill in the:

- › time
- › occasion or activity
- › what you are feeling
- › how much you feel the need for a cigarette, using the point system below:

1 = I could do without it

2 = I feel like it

3 = I need it

4 = I really need it

5 = I'm desperate for it.

[tear out from staples]

One day Smoking Diary

	Time	Occasion/activity/person I'm with	Feeling/mood	Value (1–5)	What I did
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
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19					
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21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					

Even after a day or so, you'll have a good idea about what makes you want to smoke, the times you smoke and the importance of each cigarette. These are your smoking 'triggers'.

Some of these triggers may cause cravings after you quit. However, you may only find out which are hard or easy to resist after you've spent some time without smoking.

At the end of the day, count the number of cigarettes left in your pack and work out how many cigarettes you smoked.

<input type="text"/>	less	<input type="text"/>	=	<input type="text"/>
Cigarettes in pack at start of the day		Cigarettes left at end of day		Total cigarettes smoked
If you open another pack don't forget to include those cigarettes in your calculation.				

If you missed noting down any cigarettes in your diary, can you remember when they were? If you smoked cigarettes without noticing, you may need to be on your guard around cigarettes when you quit, so you don't reach for one simply out of habit.

Try the 4Ds

- › **Delay** acting on the urge to smoke. Don't open a pack or light a cigarette. After a few minutes, the urge to smoke will weaken, especially if you do the following:
- › **Deep breathe.** Take a long slow breath in, and slowly out again. Repeat three times.
- › **Drink water.** Sip it slowly, holding it in your mouth a little longer.
- › **Do something else.** Take your mind off smoking by taking action—put on some music, go for a walk, or ring a friend.

2 Use coping thoughts

The way you think about quitting can help you resist tempting situations.

Try these tips:

- › Use positive 'self-talk'. Tell yourself 'I can quit' or 'I don't need cigarettes' or 'I can find better ways to cope'.
- › Break your smoking thought patterns. Stop thoughts that lead you to want to smoke and change them to something else.
- › Remind yourself of your main reasons to quit. Carry something with you that will help you stay motivated, such as a note or picture. Think of things you want to do as a non-smoker. Use the Deciding to Quit Checklist on page 10.
- › Think of the benefits of quitting and the positive changes in your life since you stopped.
- › Focus your mind on something else—try distraction, meditation, daydreaming.
- › Think about how good it will feel to show people who doubted you that you have succeeded at quitting.
- › Set short-term goals such as taking one day at a time.
- › Talk to someone about how you're feeling.
- › Challenge negative thoughts. If you think a cigarette would be nice, tell yourself 'no, I'm not going to be suckered back.'

3 Change what you do

Changing your routine is a great way to break the cigarette habit. Which habits or routines make you want to smoke? Use these tips to help you plan for cravings once you've quit.

Habit	Routine-change strategy
First thing in the morning	Have a shower first thing
With coffee (or tea)	Change to a different drink, brand of coffee or mug; or change the place where you drink it, hold your cup in your other hand
At morning tea	Read a magazine or book, sit in a different place or with different people
At the computer at home	Shift your desk around or redecorate it
After lunch/dinner	Go for a walk, clean your teeth
At afternoon tea	Try a herbal tea, read the paper
Straight after work	Do some exercise or meditation
Just before you start dinner	Have dinner earlier or later
With alcohol	Change to a different drink, hold drink in smoking hand
As you plan the next task/chore	Breathe deeply or try a quick relaxation exercise
As a reward, e.g. completing a chore	Listen to music, have a piece of fruit
When you're with another smoker	Chew gum, bring a water bottle
At night in front of the TV	Change the furniture around, hold a stress ball, do some stretches
Just before bed	Have a warm drink or herbal tea, read a book

As you become better at doing things instead of smoking, your cravings will tend not to happen as often or be as strong. If you are unsure of what to do in some situations, ask or watch what non-smokers do.

Just one **will** hurt

Having ‘just one’ is the way that most people go back to regular smoking. Quitting means resisting the urge to smoke even one cigarette, despite the cravings, the habit, the pressure and your own emotional reasons.

Reward yourself

Congratulate yourself every time you beat the urge to smoke. Remember to treat yourself occasionally with the money you’ve saved, such as with a movie, new music, flowers or a meal out.

Stay on track

Don’t let other people talk you into having a cigarette. It’s your decision—don’t let others pressure you. Tell them ‘no’ like you mean it.

Caffeine

Tea, coffee, cola drinks and chocolate all contain caffeine. Caffeine may make you restless, irritable and sleepless for a while. When you don’t smoke, your body retains more caffeine. Try to reduce these products and have non-caffeine drinks.

Social situations

For many smokers, having a cigarette with smoking friends is a well-entrenched habit.

Here are some strategies when going out with friends.

- › Tell yourself before you go out not to smoke.
- › Avoid some or all of your smoking friends for the first few days or weeks.
- › Have a quitting buddy or non-smoking friend with you as support.
- › You have the right to refuse a cigarette and can do so without upsetting others. Find some good phrases: ‘Please don’t offer me cigs, I’m quitting’, or ‘No thanks, I don’t smoke.’
- › Take along something to keep your hands and mouth busy when you have a craving, for example, gum, a watch, a necklace, bracelet, bottled water, phone, a stress ball or a pen.
- › Excuse yourself and go to the bathroom to wash your face or freshen up.
- › Tell yourself it’s okay to go home early if it’s getting too tough. You can afford a taxi with the money you’ve saved by quitting.
- › Stick with the non-smokers.
- › Be wary of the ‘just one won’t hurt’ thought.

Smoking and alcohol

For many smokers, smoking and drinking alcohol go hand-in-hand.

If you do drink, be careful not to drink a lot. Research confirms that if you drink enough to start feeling the effects, it becomes harder to resist smoking.

- › Avoid alcohol for a few weeks after you quit, especially in situations where you would have smoked.
- › If you do drink, cut down on how much you drink by alternating alcoholic drinks with glasses of water.
- › Change your drink to something you don't usually have to remind yourself that things are different.
- › The more you drink in one session the more likely you are to lose sight of your quitting goals.

Managing your weight

Weight gain is not always part of quitting smoking but it is common. Different people can gain different amounts of weight when stopping smoking. If you do put on weight, try not to be too hard on yourself. By quitting smoking you're doing great things for your health.

If worrying about weight gain is stopping you from quitting, talk to a health professional who can give you advice. They can help you make a healthy eating and exercise plan that suits you. Your doctor can also refer you to a dietitian or other specialist.

Tips to help manage your weight

Making small changes every week can be easier and longer lasting than trying to make a lot of changes at once.

- › Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time
 - Use the time and money you've saved from not smoking to plan and cook tasty, healthy meals that are low in fat.
 - Remove or reduce processed snacks (e.g. chips, biscuits, lollies, soft drink) in the pantry or fridge.
 - Prepare some healthy snacks—celery and carrot sticks or vegetable strips, whole fruits (not fruit juice) and nuts.
 - Try not to miss meals, especially breakfast.

- › Sometimes our bodies tell us we're hungry when really we're thirsty. Try drinking some water before reaching for a snack.
- › Don't try to stick to strict diets. Constant bouts of hunger will undermine your success at quitting.
- › Be realistic—allow yourself some treats occasionally.
- › A hot drink can be comforting—try peppermint or herbal tea.
- › If you use food to help you deal with feelings, such as anxiety, depression or loneliness, try other activities that make you feel better. If you feel you need more support, talk to your doctor.
- › Doing some more exercise can help keep your weight down and help you beat cravings.

Don't be alarmed if you gain a few kilos in the first few months. Weight gain does slow down the longer you stay quit, provided you don't over-eat.

Try this

During the first week, make changes to your *Quitting Plan* if you need to.

Did you use the ideas you wrote down? How are they working?

Do they need changing?

Are there any situations where you had trouble with cravings?

What ways could you deal with this situation next time?

Remember, starting to smoke again may not help you lose any weight you have gained.

Quitting checklist



- ☐ I have planned how to handle the places and events that I know make me want to smoke.
- ☐ I will keep my hands busy by doing something, or by fiddling with a pen, mobile phone or some beads.
- ☐ Even if I decide to have alcohol, I will stick to my decision to quit.
- ☐ I know it's okay to avoid situations that will be tough while cravings are still intense and frequent.
- ☐ I often think about what I've achieved and the positive things that have come out of quitting. I will remind myself of these when I next feel like a cigarette.
- ☐ I will reward myself from time to time with the money I have saved. I will congratulate myself every time I beat the urge for a cigarette.

Your new smoke-free life

Have you beaten your urges to smoke? Or are you getting them less often? Quitting isn't over just yet.

Getting rid of smoking is a big change in your life. Learning to enjoy and value life without cigarettes is the next step. For some people this comes naturally, while others find it harder.

Find new habits to take the place of smoking

Smokers use cigarettes for many things. For example, to concentrate, socialise, relax, fill in time, when hungry, as a reward and to cope with feelings such as stress, anger or grief.

- › What did you think cigarettes gave you? Look at your list on page 6.
- › Can you do each of these things as well as when you used to smoke?

If you answer yes, this proves that smoking wasn't really useful in this situation and that you haven't lost out by quitting.

If you answer no, it's really important to try out new ways to replace those things you felt smoking gave you. Try fun and relaxing activities with the time and money you've saved from quitting. Call Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) if you need ideas. Once you find things that work, make them a part of your regular routine.

Try this

Revive an old hobby or interest now that you have more time and money. Or take up something that you've always wanted to—learn a musical instrument, learn a new language, take art classes, do a short course, start a blog, investigate your family history, start a new sport or other hobby. Find something you really enjoy as it will help you to relax and to take time out.

Coping with stress

If you used smoking to deal with stress (as most smokers do), then you are likely to get cravings to smoke next time you're stressed out. Take your time before reacting. Remember, having a cigarette is not going to make the problem go away.

Resisting cravings and using other strategies to cope will make you less likely to have strong cravings in future stressful situations.

As a non-smoker, you've learned new skills and have shown great determination. How else can you get the support you need instead of falling back on a cigarette? Is there someone you trust who you could talk to? Do you have new, relaxing activities that help take the edge off things?

Remember, it's normal to get cravings in situations where you used to smoke. Resisting cravings is a necessary step in making them go away.

Stopping nicotine replacement products

If you used nicotine replacement products and cravings become too strong after you stop using them, start using them again for a while longer.

Try this

Think about a sudden stress or crisis that happened in your past when you were smoking, for example, bad news, an argument, or a break-up. Imagine going through it now, but without smoking. What strategies could you use? Write down your emergency plan.

- Ask a friend if you can call them (day or night) if disaster strikes.
- Call Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848) or Lifeline (13 11 14) for support.

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The quitting blues

Some people feel sad about stopping smoking. Even though people want to stop, they may feel they are losing something that has been part of their life, sometimes a big part. This is a normal reaction. It usually passes, but it may take some time.

If you are finding it tough, try to stop yourself from dwelling too much on missing smoking, as this can bring on cravings. Focus instead on the benefits quitting has brought you. If these feelings continue and you're having difficulty coping, speak to your doctor.

Confront old smoking situations

While you were quitting you may have avoided risky situations such as people or places where you used to smoke.

When you're ready, prepare for and face these situations without smoking. The more time you spend in old smoking situations without the cigarette, the less likely you will be to get cravings. In time, you'll feel more and more like a non-smoker.

If you used quitting products to help you quit, you also need to prove to yourself that you can cope in old smoking situations without this extra support.

Doing something about stress

List below the main sources of stress in your life. Now think about how much control you have or want to have over these sources of stress. Next to each of these, write the number 1, 2 or 3 depending on whether you believe it is possible for you to:

- 1] Get rid of the source of stress altogether.
- 2] Make changes to reduce the stress.
- 3] Learn to cope with the situation as it is.

For example, you might decide to try to accept and learn to cope with the peak hour traffic. This means you will continue to drive in peak hour and you will find ways of dealing with the stress. There are no right or wrong answers. Another person may make different choices for the same situation.

Sources of stress	1, 2 or 3	Ideas/plans/strategies

1 Breathe deeply and slowly**2 Relax your body and your mind**

- › Lie down or sit comfortably.
- › Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths.
- › Breathe in and tighten your feet and toes. Hold your breath and hold your muscles tight for five seconds (or longer if you can). As you breathe out, relax your muscles. Breathe slowly for a few seconds.
- › Focus your mind on what you are feeling—the tension in your muscles and the flow of relaxation as you let it go.
- › Repeat this exercise with your leg muscles, your stomach, your arms and hands, and your shoulders. Try each tense-then-relax cycle twice.
- › When you are relaxed and ready, open your eyes.

3 Look after your body

- › Eat sensibly and well.
- › Do some gentle stretches to relieve muscle tension.
- › Get enough sleep.
- › Ask a friend for a neck and shoulder massage.

4 Manage your workload and time

- › Set achievable goals.
- › Don't take on more than you can handle.
- › Ask for help if you need it.
- › Keep some distractions on hand for boring times when stuck in traffic or queues, e.g. music or a stress ball.

5 Take care of your feelings

- › Talk to others about your problems—don't keep your feelings bottled up.
- › Try to be around people who support you.

6 Do things you enjoy

- › Watch comedy.
- › Do nice things for yourself occasionally.
- › Write in a diary, read or draw.
- › Practise meditation or mindfulness.

7 Exercise

- › Go for a walk.
- › Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- › Use the stairs instead of a lift.

Sudden strong cravings

Occasionally, you might get a craving ‘out of the blue’, even years after quitting. This is normal and doesn’t mean you are failing at quitting.

This happens because you return to a situation that is linked to your past smoking habit, even if you don’t recognise it at first. For example, you might start craving a cigarette when:

- › visiting a place where you used to live when you were a smoker
- › you meet up with old friends with whom you used to smoke
- › on holiday or returning from holiday.

Once you’ve gotten through withdrawal, you are no longer addicted to nicotine. Expect these cravings to happen and see them for what they are—just memories of smoking—and let them pass. Draw on the strategies you used when you first quit to deal with these situations.

Social pressure

If your friends or family are making quitting harder for you, explain to them how you feel. Spend time relaxing with people who are glad to see you looking after your health.

The new you

You may still see yourself as a smoker who’s quit. Start to think of yourself as a non-smoker—that is, someone who sees no real use for cigarettes. The more non-smoking experiences you have, the more you’ll feel like a non-smoker or a proud ex-smoker.

Try this

Think about your plans at work and home for the next few weeks.
Can you make one or two changes to reduce the pressure?
Talk about problems openly with those involved.

Becoming a non-smoker checklist



- ☐ I have changed my routine to suit my new smoke-free life, with new hobbies, new rewards or comforts, and new ways to enjoy life.
- ☐ I am exploring new ways to manage stress, such as discussing problems or feelings with others, not taking on too much work, and looking after my body.
- ☐ I am finding new ways to relax, such as deep breathing, making time to relax my mind and body, and massage.
- ☐ I will cope with cravings that happen 'out of the blue', and know that I am still succeeding at quitting.
- ☐ I will prepare myself carefully before I return to risky places, activities, or people who smoke.
- ☐ I am planning how to cope with stressful situations. If I get stressed, I will take time to think before I react, and remind myself of other ways to cope. I will ring Quitline if I think I need more support or ideas.
- ☐ I will take action if weight gain is really a problem. I will be kind to myself if I put on a few kilos.
- ☐ I will appreciate the benefits of being a non-smoker and give myself credit for what I've achieved.
- ☐ I am a non-smoker now!

Congratulations!

Managing setbacks

Setbacks

“I tried to spend more time with my friends who don’t smoke and to think of myself as a non-smoker.”

Quitting can be hard. You might be going along ok, but suddenly ...

Warning signs

You keep on thinking ‘Just one would be ok’ or ‘It’d be great to smoke just one a month or one a week’.

But why weren’t you smoking just one a month or just one a week before you quit? The answer is because tobacco is extremely addictive. That’s why you’ve had to work so hard to quit. Don’t let nicotine control you again!

You’re really missing smoking and question whether quitting is worth the effort.

Sometimes quitting can be really tough, but you can get through it. Find other ways to treat yourself and keep doing things that you enjoy every day.

You take puffs of other people’s cigarettes but excuse it as ‘not really smoking’.

You know it’s only a matter of time before you find yourself buying a pack. Ask your friends not to give you cigarettes, no matter what.

Long after quitting, you start to wonder what one cigarette would be like.

Once you’ve been a smoker, one cigarette out of the blue has a very powerful effect on the brain which can awaken an old desire to smoke regularly. Distract yourself and move on. You’re a non-smoker now.

Try this

- › Remember, every craving only lasts a few minutes. You can fight it off: delay, deep breathe, drink water or do something else.
- › Remind yourself of how far you have come. Do you really want to have to start all over again?
- › List your reasons for quitting on a card that you can carry with you. Read the reasons whenever you feel the urge to smoke.
- › Reward yourself for staying stopped. Do things you enjoy.
- › Have you found replacements for all the things you used cigarettes for? Think of what you can do to enjoy life without cigarettes.

If you have a cigarette

Don't let one cigarette lead you back to full-time smoking. Think of how long you have gone without a cigarette and say to yourself: 'I'm determined to give up. After all, I have only slipped up once. In the past, I would have smoked 20 a day. I am determined to quit.'

Get rid of your cigarettes, plan for the rest of the day (and tomorrow) and remember the 4Ds—delay, deep breath, drink water, do something else.

Look at your *Quitting Plan* and make changes if you need to. For more help, call Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848).

Watch out for warning signs and get help from the Quitline if they start to build up or things go wrong.

Learning from a slip-up

‘I gave in to constant, strong cravings or felt restless and irritable.’

Nicotine replacement products or quitting medication can take the edge off these cravings. If you are using these products, check that you’re using them correctly and for nicotine products, using enough.

‘The whole thing got too scary and difficult.’

The first week is often the hardest to get through. Plan for low and high moods and stressful situations. Knowing what to expect can really help.

‘I started to smoke without realising it.’

Change your routine to lower your risk of triggers for cravings. Also, find a good replacement for cigarettes such as chewing gum, squeezing a stress ball or sipping from a water bottle.

‘I was stressed out!’

It’s best to plan ahead for stressful times. See pages 33 to 36 for ways to manage stress.

‘I slipped up when I had a few drinks.’

Remember, if you’re over the drink-driving limit, you’re more likely to slip up. For tips about alcohol see page 30.

‘I allowed myself to have one, and regretted it.’

See yourself as a non-smoker and find something to keep your hands busy.

‘I felt unable to say **no in the situation I was in.’**

You have the right to refuse a cigarette and can do so without upsetting others. Find some good phrases: ‘Please don’t offer me cigs, I’m quitting’, or ‘No thanks, I don’t smoke.’

A slip-up is a puff of a cigarette, or a cigarette or two, after you’ve quit. You haven’t gone back to regular smoking, but there’s a real risk you might.

If you go back to regular smoking

Don't despair. Begin to plan for your next attempt.

Most people who have successfully quit smoking for good have made several serious attempts. It may take you a while to learn to be a non-smoker.

Although you may be feeling disappointed, you should take pride in what you have achieved. Every day that you spent smoke-free made your body healthier and helped to break your habit and weaken your addiction.

When to try quitting again

The best time to consider quitting again is when you feel like you're ready. But don't wait until the perfect time—it never comes.

TRY THIS

- › Make a note of what you learnt from your recent quit attempt. What situations did you need to prepare for? What strategies worked best?
- › If you have made your home and car smoke-free, keep them that way.
- › Call the advisors at Quitline 13 QUIT (13 7848). They understand that quitting for good can take a few tries. They won't judge you, but will discuss your experiences of quitting with you and offer help with what you decide to do next.

Quitting support and services



“I’d tried to quit a few times and my friends didn’t believe in me. I rang Quitline whenever I felt like I was going to have a slip-up and it made a huge difference.”

Quitline

Call the Quitline (13 7848)

The Quitline is a confidential telephone information and advice service, available throughout Australia.

For the cost of a local call (except mobiles), professional telephone advisors provide encouragement and support to help you quit. For callers who would prefer Quitline support in a language other than English, Quit uses the Translation Information Service. Ask about this at your first call. Quitline has a team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counsellors who provide culturally secure support to clients through a call back program.

Quit HQ

www.qld.gov.au/quithq

Quit HQ is the one-stop-shop for quit smoking information and support to empower you to start your quit smoking journey and help you to quit for good. It includes quit smoking materials, resources, interactive tools, videos and programs all in one location.

Quit apps

My QuitBuddy

Available for free download at: www.quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/Content/quit-buddy

Quit for you Quit for two

If you are pregnant, or are planning to be, this app provides support and encouragement to help you give up smoking.

Available for free download at: www.quitnow.gov.au/internet/quitnow/publishing.nsf/Content/quit-now-apps

QuitTxt

QuitTxt provides regular SMS messages including tips and encouragement to help you keep on track throughout your quit attempt. The messages are tailored to where you are on your quitting journey. To begin, all you need to do is register and complete a brief questionnaire at www.quit.org.au/quittxt. This will let QuitTxt know how many messages per day you would like and when you would like them.

Your notes

Quitline
13 7848
www.qld.gov.au/quithq

 **Quitline 13 7848**

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